

REMARKS

A. Overview

Prior to this Amendment, the present application included claims 6-23. With this Amendment, Applicant has added claims 24-66 and amended claims 8 and 19. As such, claims 6-66 are pending in this application.

B. Statutory Double Patenting Rejection

Referring to numbered paragraph 2 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected claims 6-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claims 12-15 and 18-27 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,711,958.

With regard to rejected claims 6-18, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Issued independent claim 12 of the '958 patent contains two limitations not present in the pending independent claim 6: the "via an inlet-side tube segment and an outlet-side tube segment, respectively, during operation" limitation; and the "wherein a straight portion of said inlet-side tube segment and a straight portion of said outlet-side tube segment are aligned to each other" limitation.

Consequently, claim 6 is of different scope. Claims 7-18, including claim 8, as amended, depend from claim 6. None of these claims are of the same scope as the cited issued claims.

Independent claim 19, as amended, includes subject matter not recited in the issued claims 18-27 of the '958 patent. Claims 20-23 depend from claim 19. None of these claims are of the same scope as the issued claims 18-27. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

C. New Claims

By this Amendment, new claims 24-66 are added.

D. Final Remarks

Claims 6-66 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Such allowance is respectfully requested.

If necessary, please consider this a Petition for Extension of Time to affect a timely response. Please charge any additional fees or credits to the account of Bose McKinney & Evans, LLP Deposit Account No. 02-3223. In the event that there are any questions related to these amendments or to the application in general, the undersigned would appreciate the opportunity to address those questions directly in a telephone interview to expedite the prosecution of this application for all concerned.

Respectfully submitted,

BOSE McKINNEY & EVANS LLP

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Christine M. Orich', is written over a horizontal line.

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